# Historic District Guidelines Martinsville, Virginia



Church Street looking East Photograph courtesy of the Martinsville Bulletin

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Dr. Baldwin's Drug Store and St. Mary's Hospital (early 20<sup>th</sup> century) Fayette Street

Photograph courtesy of the Martinsville Bulletin

# Martinsville Architectural Review Board (2009)

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Photo captions are taken from Martinsville-Henry County Woman's Club, <u>Martinsville & Henry County Historic Views</u> (Winston-Salem, NC: Hunter Publishing Co., 1976).

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# Introduction

# **Architectural Review Board**

The Architectural Review Board (herein ARB) was established May 24, 2005 by the Martinsville City Council to protect the integrity of City's historic resources within its designated Historic Districts, both present and so designated in the future (see Section XXV: Historical Districts of the Zoning Ordinance). Preservation of these historic assets will aid in revitalization of neighborhoods within the City of Martinsville and contribute to the City's goal of fostering further economic development.

It is within the power of the ARB, in light of the aforementioned ordinances and objectives, to require property owners to file an application for a Certificate of Appropriateness prior to any exterior work being conducted on properties within designated Historic Districts. All applications will be reviewed in accordance with *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation*.

# **Work Requiring Review and Certificate of Appropriateness**

- Any exterior alterations to buildings including outbuildings (see Design Guidelines for Historic Districts).
- Construction of additions to existing buildings.
- Construction of new buildings.
- Demolition or relocation of any building or structure.
- Change in paint color (see Design Guidelines for Historic Districts).
- Changes in landscape features including driveways, walkways, sidewalks, fences and masonry walls (see Design Guidelines for Historic Districts).
- Changes or additions of signage, exterior lighting and street furniture (see Design Guidelines for Historic Districts).

# Review Procedure for Certificate of No Effect or Appropriateness **Applicant** Permit Requested Referred to City Planner Initial Review: 1. Complete Application/Plans 2. Discuss Historic District Guidelines Certificate of No Effect Certificate of Appropriateness Staff Determines: Staff determines changes are major 1. Complete application and refers to ARB for hearing. 2. Work is minor 3. Plan meets guidelines 4. No visual/character effect Hearing notice posted and sent to 5. Any modifications agreed to adjacent property owners. by owner Staff signs Certificate of No Effect ARB conducts hearing: (Expires in 2 years) 1. Staff makes recommendation 2. Owner or representative testifies 3. ARB compares to guidelines and grants, denies, or grants Certificate with stipulations Property Owner is free to pursue application for façade grant from Martinsville Uptown Revitalization Association. Set hearing date and post notice for Council hearing. Appeals: 1. Owner may appeal ARB denial to City Council within 20 days or hearing. 2. City Council may initiate appeal of ARB 1. Council conducts hearing on appeal. decision within 20 days of hearing. 2. Owner or representative may testify. 3. Council issues or denies Certificate. 2

# **Work Not Requiring Review or Certificate of Appropriateness**

Exterior routine maintenance, repair or replacement of damaged architectural features such as broken window <u>panes</u> does not require a Certificate of Appropriateness. Routine maintenance items are defined as the upkeep of architectural surfaces and elements by painting or staining, using the <u>same color</u>, and keeping trees and other plants and their root systems from damaging buildings or structures. Repair or replacement of damaged architectural elements is defined as restoring existing features in kind. In kind items are standards as stated in *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation*. In kind substitutes not in the Standards may be evaluated on a case by case basis. Repair and replacement changes are subject to a review and Certificate of Appropriateness. Owners of Contributing and Non Contributing structures in the historic district need to make all changes before the ARB. It <u>does not include</u> replacing damaged elements with substitute materials (i. e. vinyl for wood), changes in size of door and window openings or other restricted items specified in the "Design Guidelines for Historic Districts" (see also Section XXV: Historical Districts, Subsection R of the Zoning Ordinance).

- Changes or addition of plant material unless it requires alterations to or demolition of sections of the building.
- ❖ Temporary signage, lighting or street furniture for specific events. The aforementioned temporary items must be removed within 5 days of the end of the event.

#### **Application/Design Review Process**

A Certificate of Appropriateness must be obtained from the ARB prior to issuing any building permits for construction, alteration, demolition, relocation or restoration of a building or structure, including signage, change in paint color (building permit not required), exterior lighting and landscape features in the City's Historic Districts (see "Design Guidelines for Historic Districts"). Applications may be obtained from the Office of Community Development or on the web at www.martinsville-va.gov (question pending through Scott) and must be submitted to the Community Development Office at least 30 days before the Board's scheduled meeting. Incomplete or late forms will delay the design review process.

# **Application/Design Review Process (cont.)**

Items to be included with the application for Certificate of Appropriateness include, but not limited to, two (2) copies of:

- Photographs of the building prior to any construction, including the building as a whole with its surroundings and details of areas to be altered or demolished.
- Scaled architectural plan and elevation drawings.
- List of materials and colors as well as manufacturer's specification sheets.
- Detailed description of work to be undertaken.

In considering submissions for a Certificate of Appropriateness, the ARB will take into account the overall design and character of the project, the harmony of the design in relationship to existing buildings in the Historic Districts, proportion and scale (see "Design Guidelines for Historic Districts"), mass, form and materials as well as window and door configurations.

Hearings will be held in order for the petitioning parties to present the changes to or addition of building(s) in the historic districts. Adjacent property owners will be notified by letter and announcement in the *Martinsville Bulletin*. The ARB reserves the right to tour the site in question prior to its approval or denial of the application for a Certificate of Appropriateness. After the scheduled hearing a decision will be rendered on the appropriateness of the alterations, additions, new construction.

### **Certificate of Appropriateness**

A Certificate of Appropriateness will be awarded within thirty (30) days of the initial assessment of the application by the Review Board if the design of the project is deemed fitting to the Historic District in which it is located. The Certificate of Appropriateness is only for the approved design. If the design is changed after a Certificate of Appropriateness has been awarded, the applicant must submit a new application outlining the changes. Work on the project must be halted until the new design is approved, if deemed appropriate to the Historic District, and a new Certificate of Appropriateness awarded.

If a Certificate of Appropriateness is awarded, a copy of the Certificate will be attached to the application and both sets of plans stamped and dated. The application and supporting material will then be transferred to the zoning administrator and building inspector. One set of materials will remain on file and the other will be returned to the applicant.

# **Temporary Certificate of Appropriateness**

The architectural review board may, in its discretion, issue a temporary certificate of appropriateness to an applicant who does not meet the necessary requirements of architectural compatibility, but only if the applicant meets all of the following requirements: Strict application of this section would produce undue hardship; The proposed work would not be of such a permanent nature as to preclude future activity which would meet compatibility compliance; No such temporary certificate shall be issued to allow the proposed work to exist for a period longer than five (5) years.

#### **Enforcement**

If work commences without a Certificate of Appropriateness, the owners of the property are subject to penalties (see "Enforcement" below and Section XXV Subsection S: Historic Districts of the Zoning Ordinance).

# **Martinsville Historic Districts**

The City of Martinsville, Virginia presently contains three Historic Districts; Martinsville Historic District, East Church Street – Starling Avenue Historic District and the Fayette Street Historic District.

# **Martinsville Historic District:**

The Martinsville Historic District, designated a National Register Historic District in 1998, initially contained 119 contributing buildings along sections of Church and Main streets as well as streets joining these arteries through the City of Martinsville (see Historic District Map on file).

# <u>East Church Street – Starling Avenue Historic District:</u>

The East Church Street – Starling Avenue Historic District, designated a National Register Historic District in 2006 encompasses portions of East Church Street, Brown Street, Cleveland Avenue, Market Street East, Scuffle Hill, Letcher Court and Starling Avenue (see Historic District Map on file).

#### **Fayette Street Historic District:**

The Fayette Street Historic District, designated a National Register Historic District in 2007, includes 16 blocks along Fayette Street from Market Street to Memorial Boulevard (see Historic District Map on file).

# **Design Guidelines for Historic Districts**

# **Exterior Changes to Existing Buildings**

Exterior changes to an existing building are defined as, but not limited to, replacement or alterations to siding or shingles, windows, doors, architectural trim work, porches, entryways, roofs, chimneys, storefronts, awnings, shutters, dormers, masonry (including re-pointing) and new paint color. Also covered under these guidelines are the additions of modern equipment, fire escapes and handicap access.

#### Access

Consult the 2003 Edition of the Virginia Uniform Statewide Building Code (a copy can be referenced in the Inspections Department).

#### **Architectural Trim Work**

In most cases architectural trim work defines the historic character and integrity of a building or structure. As such every effort should be taken to preserve these original features. If repairs to these elements are necessary it is appropriate to use materials consistent with the historic nature of the building and to replace only the damaged areas. Elements beyond repair should be replaced in kind and historically accurate in profile, scale and material. Replacing these elements with synthetic composition materials may be appropriate to utilize in order to affect the integrity of the building and the Historic District as a whole.

# Chimneys

Chimneys are an integral part of many historic buildings whether they serve fireplaces or furnaces and should be maintained and in good repair. Re-pointing should be done in a timely manner to preserve the integrity of the chimney. Mortar joints should be uniform and the same profile, color and gap as original joints. Existing chimneys should not be replaced by those smaller in scale or height, but maintain the proportion and size of the original.

#### **Doors**

Doors, in the confines of the Design Guidelines, also includes its surround and other associated elements such as transoms, fan lights, side lights, pilasters, pediments, hoods and architectural moldings.

Original or contributing later doors and their surrounds should be maintained to preserve their historic integrity. Door openings shall not be altered in width, scale or configuration. Repair of the aforementioned elements should be done in kind and limited to only those sections needing repair. Replacement of these elements should also be in kind. Doors should have the same or similar design and appearance as the original. Aluminum, metal and vinyl are not acceptable. Similarly aluminum or vinyl screen doors are not historic to a majority of the buildings within the Historic Districts and as such will not be accepted in most instances. Wood screen doors have historic precedence and therefore are suitable for historic areas. Suitable synthetic composition materials will be considered.

#### **Dormers**

Dormers that are original to the building/structure should be retained as an integral part of the design and balance of the structure. Additional dormers added to a building should match existing dormers. New dormers constructed on a building that did not previously have this architectural element should be in proportion to the scale of the building and provide overall continuity in design. While wood is the most appropriate material for these architectural elements, other materials will be reviewed on a case by case basis, such as Hardie board.

# Fire Escapes

See Section 303 of the *2006 IEBC*. Fire escapes in historic districts should be confined to the side or rear of the building unless this would promote a hazard.

#### Masonry

Masonry encompasses foundations as well as exterior walls. Foundations should be maintained so as to provide structural integrity to the structure. New construction should take into account the height of the foundations of existing buildings and complement the surroundings in scale, height, material and proportion. Exposed

concrete foundations are not historically applicable and must be covered in an appropriate material in the instance of new construction or repair.

Masonry exterior walls such as stone, brick and stucco should also be maintained to secure the structural integrity of the building. Painting masonry is not recommended (with the exception of stucco), but will be reviewed on a case by case basis.

Mortar joints of stone and brick structures should retain original profile, width of joint, color and style.

## **Modern/Mechanical Equipment**

Technological changes and updates in interior functions sometimes require modern equipment to be installed on or next to an existing building. Mechanical equipment is defined as, but not limited to, air conditioners, heat pumps, antennas, alarm systems, propane or oil tanks, dumpsters, solar panels, utility meters and satellite dishes.

Installation of this type of equipment and its related fastener and other parts should be placed to be as unobtrusive as possible. It is preferable that this equipment be installed in the rear of buildings or concealed by fencing or plant material so as to not interfere with the historic integrity of the district. Equipment such as vents and air conditioners should be painted the same color as the surface or window trim, respectively. If roof installation of mechanical equipment is required then units should be placed out of the direct sight lines of the public, such as behind a chimney, parapet or on the rear slope. Additional utility lines should continue to be placed underground if economically feasible.

Seasonal air conditioners do not come under the purview of the ARB, but it is strongly recommended, for the overall appearance of the Historic District, that window units be placed on the side or rear of the building.

#### **Outbuildings**

Outbuildings that are contributing structures within a Historic District should have the same considerations as the buildings to which they belong.

Modern outbuildings should be in keeping with the main building in style or complementary and similar materials used.

# **Painting**

Paint colors not appropriate to the history of the building and its time period will be considered on a case by case basis. Drastic color changes may be incompatible with the surrounding buildings and character of the Historic District. Paint colors, samples, and chips are to be submitted along with the application.

Painting of masonry surfaces is not recommended, but will be considered on a case by case basis. Brick, stucco, stone and mortar, by their nature, retain some moisture. By painting the surface, it traps moisture resulting in the deterioration of the masonry. Paint on masonry also leads to higher maintenance of the building due to upkeep of the painted surfaces. Owners should consider opaque stains on both masonry and wooden surfaces.

# Porches/Balconies/Stairs/Entryways

Original or later contributing porches, balconies, stairs and entryways, particularly in public view are defining characteristics of historic buildings. Removal or alteration of these elements is not appropriate to the integrity of the building or the Historic District as a whole.

The exposed nature of these architectural elements requires they be painted regularly and sections repaired when necessary. If elements cannot be repaired and must be replaced they should be replaced in kind (same material, scale, type and profile) to maintain the integrity of the building. Substitute composite material other than in kind may be considered on a case by case basis.

Original entryways and stairs and those added later that contribute to the historic nature of the building should be retained and kept in good repair. Balance and scale of these architectural features is integral to the original design of the building. Expanding exterior door openings is not recommended because it will forever alter the building's historic integrity.

In the case of the addition of a new porch or balcony, the design should be compatible with the historic appearance of the building and those surrounding it. Research should be undertaken to determine the appropriate style, scale and material of this new feature. Detailed architectural drawings of the proposed addition will be required. Design assistance may be available to aid in compliance.

#### Roofs

Original roof slope and materials should be retained wherever possible. To avoid problems, roofs should be kept in good repair. Changes in roof material or color of asphalt shingles need to be approved by the ARB. Ornamental items that are placed on the roof should fit the era of the building and need to be approved by the ARB.

#### Shutters/Blinds

Shutters have been popular on buildings/structures constructed after the 1790s in most places and were typical during the late 1800s through the 1960s and are an integral part of the appearance of the structure. If appropriate to the building, shutters should remain. When replacement becomes necessary, the new shutters or blinds should reflect the appearance and materials of the original respective architectural period. Permanent removal or change in material of shutters requires a Certificate of Appropriateness.

#### **Siding**

Exterior siding is an important feature of buildings and provides authenticity to the appearance of Historic Districts. It is important, therefore, original materials be retained and kept in good repair, including painted surfaces. If repairs are necessary it is recommended that only those sections needing repair be addressed to maintain as much historic fabric as possible. Replacement of wood siding should be in kind with the same appearance as the original. Other materials may be considered on a case by case basis. Vinyl or aluminum siding is not appropriate to the integrity of Historic Districts, may do irreparable damage to the structure and will not be approved. The removal of vinyl or aluminum siding and replacing it with wood or a suitable material

appropriate to the time period is encouraged. Research should be conducted as to the type of siding originally on the building or structure or, if unknown, the types available when the building was constructed.

# **Storefronts and Awnings**

Original storefronts within commercial districts should maintain their historic integrity, including windows, entryways and exterior wall materials. Architectural elements should not be covered, particularly with vinyl or aluminum siding or other materials. It is encouraged to remove such materials and restore the facades to their original appearance. Alternations may be considered on a case-by-case basis.

In-fill of new buildings or structures should maintain the placement and setbacks of surrounding structures. Typically, the front facades of commercial buildings in a downtown setting are adjacent to sidewalks. New in-fill construction should reflect this pattern of development and, if applicable, have parking in the rear of the building. This also creates a more pedestrian friendly environment and has historic precedent. Facades should be designed to compliment the surrounding buildings in material, style, scale and window and door opening patterns.

Cloth or canvas awnings have historic precedence in downtown commercial districts. Awnings should not detract or hide defining architectural elements of buildings and should be attached in a manner as to not damage the historic fabric of the structure even when removed. Materials other than canvas will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

#### Windows

Windows are a very important architectural feature of buildings and structures and therefore great care should be taken to maintain original windows and the pattern of openings along the façade. It is not recommended or appropriate to the historic integrity of the building or structure to alter these patterns by enclosing, removing, widening or otherwise compromising the appearance of the building. It is understood that windows may need to be replaced due to irreparable damage or energy efficiency. If windows need to be replaced, the character of the building must be retained. Window mullions of

the new windows must reflect the arrangement of the original. If the type of window originally on the building/structure is not known then replacement of those windows should conform to the time period in which the building as constructed. True divided panes are encouraged, however, other alternatives may be considered on a case by case basis.

# **Additions to Existing Buildings**

Historically buildings were expanded to suit the needs of its occupants. It is therefore recognized that additions to existing buildings become necessary even in modern times. Additions to building or structures within the Historic Districts should be designed to compliment the existing residence or business and the streetscape. Additions should not destroy or obscure existing historical features and should retain the scale, style and materials of the main building.

#### **New Construction**

New construction should follow the same considerations as additions to existing buildings in the Historic District, including scale, materials, complimentary styles, setbacks and size. New construction in historic districts may not be more than 55 feet in height in order to maintain the integrity and historic appearance of the district.

# Landscape and Setting

## **Driveways/Off-Street Parking/Walkways**

Driveways in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century were traditionally concrete, brick or gravel. Asphalt driveways will be permitted so long as it doesn't interfere with the appearance of the building. The width of the driveway should not be more than 13 feet wide to maintain the scale and appearance of the structure to which it belongs. This applies to both residential homes and homes which have been rezoned for commercial use.

Off-street parking should be carefully designed in order not to compromise the historic integrity of the property. Ideally parking for residential properties should be on the side of the building or in the rear. Parking for commercial buildings should be in the rear in order to maintain the setbacks of the structures within Historic Districts.

Brick pavers, concrete or concrete aggregate are acceptable for walkways within both commercial and residential components of Historic Districts. Asphalt walkways are not appropriate for either application.

#### Fences/Walls

Fences constructed of wood, brick, iron work, and stone or stucco walls are appropriate for Historic Districts so long as they do not obstruct the view of the building. Chain link or plastic are discouraged. The ARB will consider all future fencing products as technology advances.

# Lighting

Lighting should be tailored to reflect the desired ambiance of a Historic District and requires a Certificate of Appropriateness if in public view.

# **Signs**

Signs within designated Historic Districts should take into account the present and future pedestrian and vehicle traffic. Signs should be designed in a manner that reflects the desired appearance of the Districts and not detract from the historic integrity of the area. Historic signage should be retained and not covered by modern signage or introduced construction material.

Dimensions of signs should be in keeping with the scale of the buildings and not incompatible with the surrounding streetscapes. Wood, etched glass, brick and stone are appropriate materials for signs within designated historic areas. Plastic signs, plastic lettering, large vinyl lettering or other signage that distracts from the historic nature of the district are not appropriate. Signage requires a Certificate of Appropriateness from the ARB. Please refer to City Sign Ordinance - Code Appendix B, Section VII, N for further information.

#### **Billboards**

Billboards within Historic District boundaries will not be permitted.

# **Relocation/Demolition**

Relocation or demolition of historic structures and buildings within Historic Districts compromises the integrity, appearance, continuity and unity of the District as a whole as well as the economic viability of the City. In addition, vacant lots lead to disjointed streetscapes and a loss of community. It is preferable to create a plan for adaptive reuse of buildings within the Historic Districts rather than relocation or demolition.

Relocation or demolition are options of last resort and require a permit from the ARB. This process applies to structures within public view as well as contributing buildings not in view. Relocation will be considered only to prevent demolition. A demolition permit for structures and buildings within Historic Districts will only be approved if the structure does not contribute to the District as a whole. Demolition by neglect will not be tolerated. If the structure is deemed unsound by a <u>certified historic buildings inspector</u>, an application for a permit to demolish the building may be granted.

If demolition or relocation is approved, it will be <u>required</u> of the property owner to provide written documentation of historic elements of the building, architectural elevations and plans and photographs in compliance to the Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS) standards.

To guarantee vacant lots are utilized in a timely manner, the property owner must provide a time table and assurance in writing that the building on the lot will be replaced or its future use. The new building will require a Certificate of Appropriateness.

#### **Incentives/Grants**

Property owners in Historic Districts *may* qualify for the following incentives/grant programs. Properties must meet individual requirements in order to qualify.

 Federal Historic Tax Credits – Managed by the National Park Service. If rehabilitation meets certain requirements and the end result is an incomeproducing property, a property owner could claim 20% of their qualified

- rehabilitation expenses as a credit on their federal income taxes AND they could claim 25% of their qualified rehabilitation expenses as a credit on their state income tax.
- 2. <u>Virginia State Historic Tax Credits</u> Managed by the Department of Historic Resources, Virginia's Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credit Program allows property owners to receive a state tax credit of 25 percent of eligible expenses for approved rehabilitation work on certified historic structures. The work must meet the Secretary of Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation. The credits may be earned for the rehabilitation of owner-occupied and income-producing properties.
- Enterprise Zone Real Property Investment Grant Grants are available to qualified zone investors in amounts up to 20% of the total amount of qualified real property investment.
- 4. Partial Exemption on Taxation of Substantially Rehabilitated Real Estate:
  - a. The City will refund the owner, real estate taxes paid for qualifying projects for new investment for substantial rehabilitation, renovation or replacement
  - Structure must be at least 15 years old and can not exceed 110% of the original square footage
  - c. Refunds calculated at 100% for the first year and 50% for years 2 5 over the increase in assessed value
- 5. <u>Save America's Treasures</u> is a public-private partnership between the National Park Service and the National Trust for Historic Preservation. SAVE AMERICA'S TREASURES, National Trust for Historic Preservation, 1785 Massachusetts Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036. To inquire about local preservation projects or for further information about preservation programs in your specific area, please contact your National Trust regional or field office.

# **Appendices**

# **Architectural Terms**

Column – a freestanding hollow structural support of various styles typically found on porches.

*Cornice* – molding underneath the roof line.

*Dormer* – window which projects vertically from the roof.

Façade – the front elevation of a building or structure.

Gable Roof – a triangular shaped roof with equal roof slopes.

Hipped (or Hip) Roof – a pyramidal shaped roof (typical of early 20<sup>th</sup> century buildings).

Historic Integrity – maintaining the historic materials used in the original construction or subsequent historic additions of a building or structure.

*Muntins* – divisions between panes of glass of a sash window.

*Pediment* – triangular element above an entry.

*Pilaster* – an ornamental square attached column typically flanking an entrance.

*Post* – a freestanding solid structural support of various styles typically found on porches.

*Re-pointing* – the removal of damaged mortar and replacing it with new mortar.

Sash – movable section of a window.

Shed Roof – a single direction slanted roof

Sidelights – Narrow vertical windows on either side of a door.

*Transom* – Horizontal window panes typically above a door.

Vernacular - Architecture that makes use of common regional forms and materials at a particular place and time; sometimes includes strong ethnic influences of an immigrant population; usually modest, unassuming, and unpretentious, and often a mixture of traditional and more modern styles or a hybrid of several styles. Houses are often owner-built by people familiar with local materials, regional climatic conditions, and local building customs and techniques, as described under folk architecture.

# Bibliography:

McAlester, Virginia and Lee. A Field Guide to American Houses. New York: Knopf, 1993.

## Resources

#### Local Resources:

Martinsville Uptown Revitalization Association (MURA) 217 E Church Street P. O. Box 614 Martinsville, VA 24114 (276) 632-5688

Virginia Department of Historical Resources Regional Preservation Office 1030 Penmar Ave., SE Roanoke, VA 24013 (540) 857-7585

#### State Resources:

Virginia Department of Historical Resources 2801 Kensington Ave. Richmond, VA 23221 www.dhr.virginia.gov (804) 367-2323

APVA Preservation Virginia- Shenandoah Valley Office (Regional Office) 120 South Augusta Street Staunton, Virginia 24401-4222 540-886-6100

#### National Resources:

National Trust for Historic Preservation 1785 Massachusetts Avenue, NW Washington, DC 20036 www.nationaltrust.org (202) 588-6000

Southern Office of the National Trust for Historic Preservation 1785 Massachusetts Ave, NW Washington, DC 20036 (202) 588-6107

National Park Service\* US Department of the Interior 1849 C Street, NW Washington, DC

www.cr.nps.gov

(202) 343-9578 (Preservation Assistance Division)

<sup>\*</sup>Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation